

Preparing for a Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) Meeting

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What will be discussed during the meeting?

A: During the meeting, Offenders are required to do the following:

- ☐ Tell about what they did
- ☐ Tell about how they feel about what they did
- ☐ Tell about what consequences (Court Order) they have as a result of what they did
- ☐ Listen to the victim's statement(s)
- ☐ Answer victim(s) questions
- ☐ Offer sincere apologies
- ☐ Determine a restitution plan/agreement

Victims generally want to:

- ☐ Tell about how the incident impacted them, their lives, their families, their communities
- ☐ Hear why offenders did what they did
- ☐ Ask the offenders questions
- ☐ Listen to apologies and often offer forgiveness
- ☐ Discuss the restitution options they have in mind
- ☐ Determine a restitution plan/ agreement

Q: What is going to happen during the meeting?

A: First, the mediator will make introductions, explain the process, discuss the ground rules, and discuss the objectives of the meeting.

Second, each party will have uninterrupted time to make their statement (during this time we ask that all other parties sit and listen without interrupting).

Third, victims will have an opportunity to ask, and receive answers to their questions.

Fourth, offenders will be given time to make their apologies.

Fifth, restitution options will be discussed.

Finally, a written restitution agreement will be drafted and signed by all parties.

Q: What if the other party acts or speaks inappropriately?

A: The main job of the mediator is to ensure an environment appropriate for discussion. The ground rules of the meeting are: no interrupting, no foul or threatening language, no threatening gestures, no shaming, no emotional outbursts. We expect all participants to be respectful toward each other, honest in their communication, and genuine in their discussions. If these ground rules are broken, the mediator may remind or warn participants or make the decision to end the meeting.

Q: Who will be at the mediation?

A: The participants of any particular mediation can vary, but common to all are: the victim(s), victim support person(s), the offender(s), the offender(s) parent(s), and the mediator.

Q: How long will the meeting take?

A: We recommend planning for roughly two hours, but times vary depending on the number of victims and offenders present.

Victim Preparation- Before the meeting

- ☐ Choose if you would like to speak first, or have offender speak first and let VORP Director know before meeting begins.
- ☐ Prepare any thoughts you would like to share (according to your comfort level) regarding the impact of the incident: How the incident impacted you psychologically, emotionally, physically, financially; impacts on your life, family, neighborhood, community...
- ☐ Prepare a statement about the amount and type of restitution you desire: What are the ways that the offender(s) can re-pay you, or otherwise right the wrong, for the incident. Please feel free to discuss any options/ideas you have with the VORP director prior to the meeting.
- ☐ Think about and bring along with you any support person you feel would be beneficial to you during the meeting. Although support persons do not take a speaking part in the meeting, they do provide important help to victims.

Offender Preparation- Before the meeting

- ☐ Prepare to tell the victim about the incident: What happened, when, how, & why?
- ☐ Prepare to tell about how you feel about what you did.
- ☐ Prepare to discuss your court order and terms of your probation.
- ☐ Think about how the victim might feel because of the incident.
- ☐ Think about how you will sincerely apologize to the victim.
- ☐ Think about how you can re-pay the victim for what you did.
- ☐ Remember that at least one parent is also required to attend the meeting.